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AMERICA  
SAVE THE NEAR EAST

ABRAHAM MITRIE RIHBANY

1847 - Peace terms. ✓

2. Syria. - 1848.

3. Geneva.

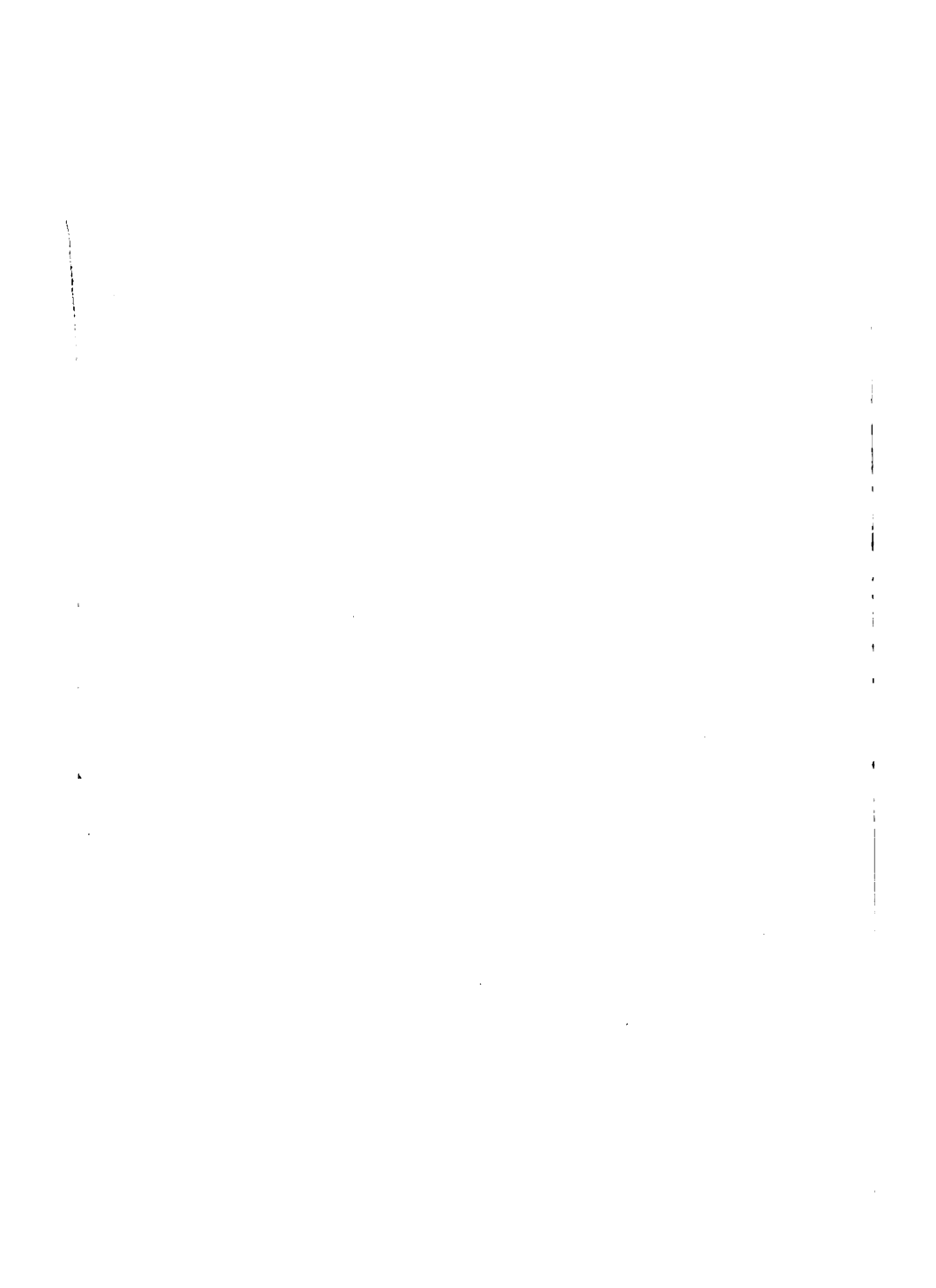
4. U.S. - Foreign relations, Syria, 1848.

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SAVE THE NEAR EAST**

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A FAR JOURNEY. Illustrated  
THE SYRIAN CHRIST  
MILITANT AMERICA AND JESUS CHRIST

# AMERICA SAVE THE NEAR EAST

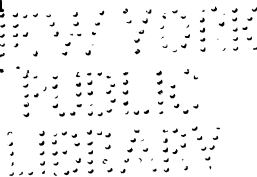
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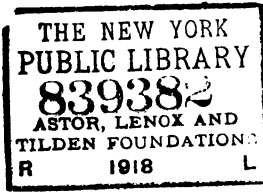
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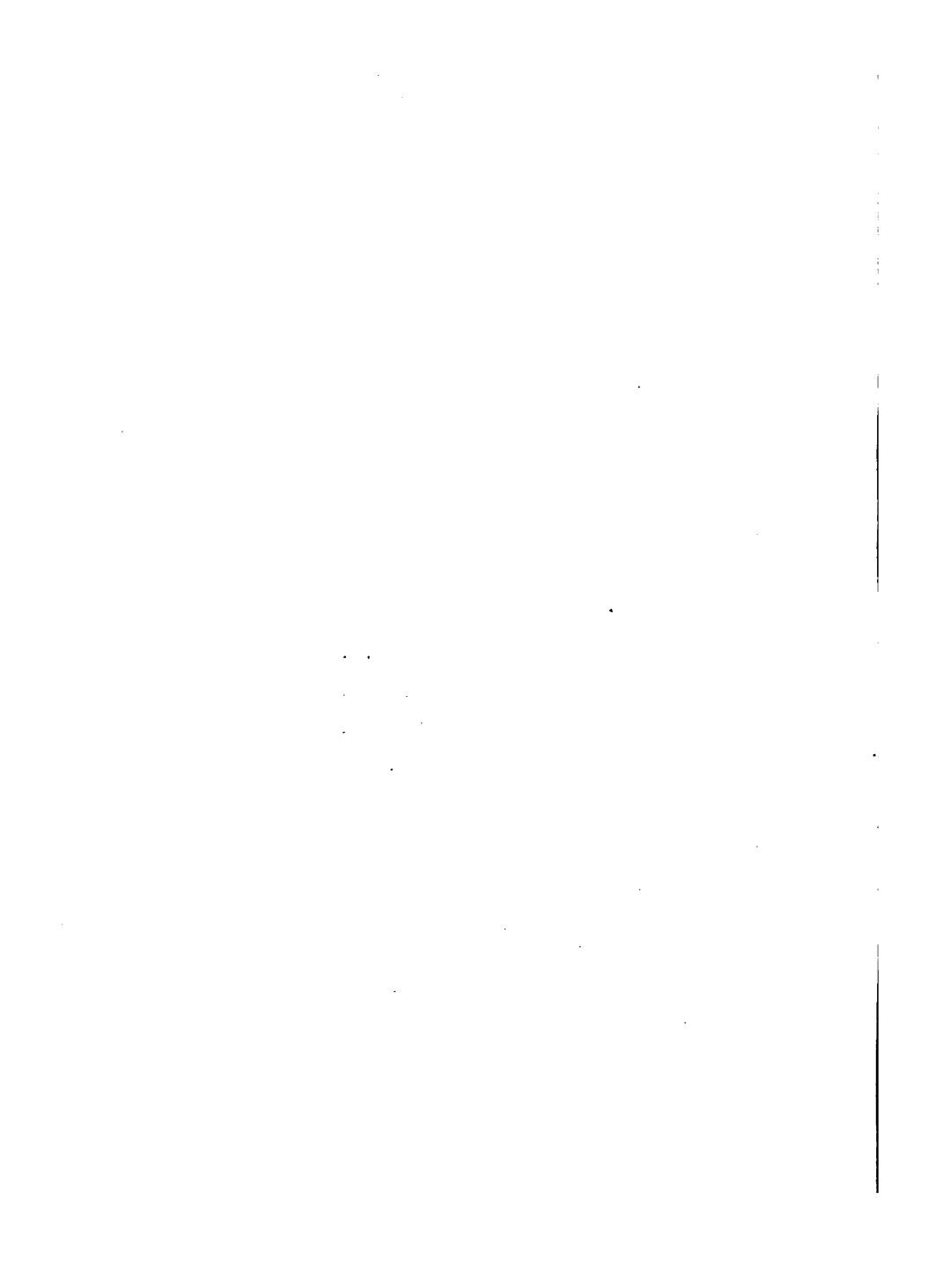
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## PREFACE

**A** PREFACE is a misplaced post-script. It is always written last, and generally meant to serve as the author's excuse for what he has already done. This is true, at least in the present instance. When I finished writing the last chapter of this book, the thought came to me that I needed to say one or two more things; hence the preface.

I have made my plea to America to undertake the reconstruction of Syria as the pivotal point of the Asiatic Turkish provinces as an individual and not as Syria's authorized spokesman. As one

## PREFACE

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who has intimate knowledge of Syria's problems and of the spirit of American institutions, and a fair acquaintance with Europe's dealings with the East, I have spoken my own conviction on this subject and advocated what I believe to be the best plan of government for my mother country.

At the same time I believe that I have advocated that which the majority of enlightened Syrians in this country and the much afflicted "old home" would approve. If the repeated declarations of such Syrians in America that it is "the best country in the world," "the land of true freedom," "the home of justice," "the country of fair play," and that "it has done for us what no other country

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could have done" are as sincere as I believe they are, then my countrymen cannot conscientiously reject my plan. Nay, I have every reason to believe that they will join me in the appeal to this great country to carry into our motherland the blessings which she has bestowed upon us as immigrants, and which we prize as highly as life itself. In this way only, as it seems to me, Syria can be permanently saved not only from Turkish misrule, but from European complications also, and made to take her place among the free countries of the world.

The brevity of the present volume is intentional. Its purpose is not to give an exhaustive treatment of its subject, but to voice the desire of an oppressed

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people for deliverance. It is a brief expression of the ardent hope that America will heed the call of the oppressed, as well as that of her own greater destiny, and go to the rescue of the Near East.

ABRAHAM MITRIE RIHBANY

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

# AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

## CHAPTER I THE NEW OUTLOOK

*"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways."*

TENNYSON

**W**HEN the Pilgrim Fathers landed on the shores of this continent, a new thing happened under the sun. It was not merely a new occurrence such as always happens, nor a new experience in the lives of those few English men and women who made up the human cargo of the Mayflower. No; the advent of those pious English Separatists



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in the wilds of North America is of the same class and significance as the arrival of the patriarch Abraham in Palestine, and the going of the apostle Paul with the Christian message to the Gentiles.

When those Pilgrims first “rolled the psalm to wintry skies” on the fringe of the vast wilderness, a distinctly new consciousness, both individual and social, came into existence. It was a fresh impulse of the Infinite Heart, and the urge of a nobler destiny than the peoples of the earth had known. An infant, with mighty potentialities, was then born in a new environment — a New World indeed — which afforded the new birth limitless scope for its proper development.

The deep and fundamental desire of the Pilgrim Fathers, and the other pilgrims who populated the shores of Massa-

## THE NEW OUTLOOK

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chusetts Bay and the Connecticut Valley, was destined to form nobler decisions and effect immeasurably more far-reaching conclusions than those who first felt it dreamed of. They longed for freedom of conscience and of action within the limits of just laws. The wilderness and the solitary place were glad for them, and the desert began to rejoice and blossom as the rose. They *began* to realize their ardently coveted freedom. Their new holy land, which stood remote from the habitations of ancient civilizations and free from the saturation of firmly established traditions, provided them with the proper atmosphere. It deepened the new consciousness in them beyond their knowing, and began to challenge the old selves which they brought with them.

What the early settlers of New England

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

were not and could not be fully aware of was the great fact that their new consciousness and their precious quest — the freedom of conscience and action — were not exclusively their own, but a trust which they held for all mankind. They longed for freedom with the collective heart of the human race. They sought to realize the world-old hope of the toiling and struggling generations, of the peoples who dreamed of freedom but had not the power to convert their dreams into realities. Their little “meeting houses” and school houses and town meetings were the mere rudiments of a free church, a free school, and a free state for untold millions. Those millions have been following the trail of the Pilgrims ever since the 21st of December, 1620. Upon coming into the free atmosphere of America,

## THE NEW OUTLOOK

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every intelligent person of that mighty host says to himself, "This exhilarating air is just what I have long craved, but did not find in the Old World." The sons and daughters of every land and race who come to this country recognize their heritage of lawful freedom when they come into it.

The Fathers of the American Commonwealth came to the New World with the half-formed, but vital, desire of the Anglo-Saxon for the rights of free men. Back of them was the Magna Charta and the great and incessant struggles of their kinsmen for true and secure representative government. The watchword of the Anglo-Saxon through the ages has not been simply "the Fatherland," but "Freedom and Justice!" The line of his battle for the establishment of these two

## **AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST**

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foundation beams of individual and social existence extends from Runnymede to Philadelphia. It spans the centuries from the time of the Magna Charta to the time of the Declaration of Independence.

So when the Puritans of New England presumed to run counter to the fundamental principles of freedom, when they presumed to have freedom for themselves and to deny it to others, they came into collision with that nobler consciousness which was stirring in the deeps of their own lives, with the trend of the Anglo-Saxon spirit, and with the pleading desire of oppressed humanity.

From the very beginning of her history America has been inhospitable to fixed dogma and arbitrary limitations of any kind. Her fundamental principle, which

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## THE NEW OUTLOOK

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existed before it was put into definite form — that all men are entitled to the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — forever resists all finalities, whether of theology, legislation, or tradition. Her genius is of the nature of eternal wisdom; it seeks to guide and not to drive, to liberate and not to imprison, to rule the least and to educate the most. Rigid theological dogma was reëstablished in America, but only for a time. The franchise was arbitrarily limited in America, but only for a season. Slavery disgraced America, but only for a day — although a long one. The spirit of freedom which led the Pilgrims across the sea never slumbered nor slept. The mills of God did grind slowly, but their wheels never stopped.

A country destined to be the mother of

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

peoples, races, and kindreds can have no other principle of action than this. Her fugitive founders pledged themselves before God "to walk together." Their vow has become the law and gospel of the millions of later comers from the east and from the west, and from every nation under heaven. Through their diversified social and political institutions, by their toils and struggles, even by their contentions class with class, the heterogeneous elements of American society are endeavoring, consciously and unconsciously, "to walk together." They are striving to realize in their life the principle of coöperative citizenship.

The task seems to be stupendous, but the soul of America is equal to this mighty task. The new consciousness which was born in Plymouth will, if heeded, guide

## THE NEW OUTLOOK

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all these endeavors to victory. It fought and won the battles of the Revolution, put sanity and wisdom into the old and dangerously radical doctrine of "States' Rights," cast out the demon of slavery, and condemned Know-Nothingism to death. This spirit of lawful democratic freedom is still in its youth, vital, strong, eager. It is moulding the characters of the millions of alien-born citizens, and wrestling successfully with vast and complex social and political problems. As the spirit of freedom and fair play it is the desire of all nations and has the eternal years of God on its side.

This same spirit has just reversed another decision which America made many years ago, and which has outgrown its usefulness. At the close of the war of the Revolution, America pledged herself



## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

to political isolation. She decided never to allow herself to be entangled in the meshes of European affairs. At the time it was made, and for many years after, this decision was eminently wise. In the first place, America had a vast continent to tame and convert into an asset of civilization. She had also the more glorious task of assimilating its new-born democratic freedom into national character, and of bringing up generations of men who never knew nor bowed the knee to autocratic rulers. Complete freedom from the methods of European diplomacy, which was until very recently the secret, and often criminal, game of kings and chancellors, was for America a blessed necessity. The wise and far-sighted decision of political isolation for more than a century served its noble purpose. It

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enabled America to convert a vast wild continent into a habitation of a new civilization, to bring up generations of free-born men, and to adopt into her free household millions of new pilgrims, the less free children of other lands.

But that wise policy was also destined to become antiquated, to have its day and cease to be. Not only the restless spirit of progress in the world at large, but the deeper and nobler spirit of America herself was bound to set aside and go by the policy of isolation. Do what she would, America could not live completely unto herself alone. Even in her early youth she *challenged* Europe by assuming a virtual protectorate over the whole group of the South American nations. Partly for economic reasons and partly

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from a sense of hospitality and a fellow-feeling for all the oppressed among men, she opened wide her gates to a cosmopolitan immigration. She *invited* the children of all lands to her new, free, and comfortable home. And those guests came, came in their millions, came with their deep sympathies with the less fortunate countries of their birth. They were bound in the course of time to relate America actively to the Old World. Where sympathy goes, sooner or later, action must follow.

Again the American missionary and the "Yankee" merchant have penetrated all countries. The keen-eyed, quick-witted "Yankee" commercial agent is seen and *felt* in every country on the globe. The American engineer and professional man hold eminent positions in

## THE NEW OUTLOOK

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many lands. Whether through commercial, professional, or educational activities and enterprises, the aggressive American has been for the last forty years working slowly but surely to reverse his country's policy of isolation.

So through all these agencies, which have come into being through America's amazing growth and the multiplicity of her activities and interests, she acquired a double personality. The one side of that personality adhered to the old theory of "America for herself," the other tended in the direction of the larger vision of "America for humanity." The contention between those two personalities, although not severe, was very real. The green pastures and restful waters of life in America prevented, or postponed, an acute crisis. The internal conditions of

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the country afforded no urgent reason for making an issue of the difference between those two tendencies and forcing it into the arena of public discussion.

At last the test did come. The crisis was precipitated by the world from which America had thought herself isolated. The Teuton, lusting for world-dominion, swooped down upon Europe and almost crushed her into submission. America felt the shock of the brutal onslaught, shuddered slightly, and then recovered her composure. "It is only a *European* war," said America's old self, "and I have no business there." So thought and spoke millions of Americans. The war was not *our* war. European plotters hatched it out, therefore let Europe fight it out. Remember what Washington said, that we must not allow ourselves

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to be entangled in European affairs. We shall not draw the sword until we are actually invaded. But that was not to be. He who sitteth in the heavens laughed! To him and his wise and enlightened children the struggle was neither European nor American; it was *human*. Justice was being assailed by injustice, and good savagely attacked by evil. The old mysterious challenge came again to America: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."

America's new self heeded the mighty Voice. The great Republic began to realize that when Belgium was overwhelmed, we were invaded; when France was smitten, we were invaded; when Serbia was devastated, when Armenia and Syria

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were given to famine and the sword, when the Lusitania was sunk, and when the Teuton proclaimed a reign of terror on land and sea, *we* were invaded. The very fabric of democracy for which the Anglo-Saxons have fought for a thousand years was in eminent danger of being shattered.

Was America to break down morally by shirking the obligations of her own declaration that all men are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Was she to crouch down in fear in her gilded palaces, bolt her gates, and write on them "Safety First!" or was she to rise in her might and battle for the cause of justice and liberty?

The great Republic made her decision at last. She did follow the Lord God and not Baal. Her sons *are in Europe* in

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millions, battling gallantly for the divine rights of man.

Does all this not seem like a dream? Yes, but it is not a dream of the night, but the vision of a glorious destiny. America is now delivering to the world the trust which she has held for it since the time when that shot was fired at the Concord bridge. She has definitely broken through the barriers which separated her from other nations and acquired a new outlook!



## CHAPTER II

### WILL AMERICA GO TO THE NEAR EAST?

**T**HE mere suggestion that America should continue her eastward march to the historic eastern shores of the Mediterranean must seem to many to be very strange. What business can we possibly have in those remote regions of the earth, and what affinity with their inhabitants, who differ so radically from us in blood and modes of living? The same old question again, and the same old reason for it. We are so far away. We feel no lust for conquest. We share no ideals with the races

## WILL AMERICA GO?

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of western Asia, and above all we do not mean to depart completely from our wise policy not to be deeply entangled in the affairs of other nations. What gain could there be for us if we should embark on a new policy of invasion, peaceful or otherwise?

I have not the slightest inclination to suggest that America should go into any other country in the world for *gain*, nor to use the odious terms "conquest" and "invasion." The two terms which I would use, and which seem to me to represent the very essence of America's genius and her obligation toward the weaker peoples of the Near East, are "coöperation" and "service." America should make her great and beneficent influence felt as a constructive force among those peoples, simply because she has

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

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something to *give* which they *need* to have.

It was indeed wise and of great service to humanity that America refrained for many generations from taking part in the imperialistic machinations of the Old World. She did wisely to shun "the game of kings." But now new impulses are agitating human society all over the world. Not the game of kings, but the legitimate struggles of *peoples* to gain their lawful rights now occupy the stage of social evolution. This being the case, can America stand aside, as she thought she could at the breaking out of the present war, and say, "Let the world drift as it will, I have no interest in other peoples' struggles"? No! A nation "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created

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equal," cannot justly pursue such a course and condemn herself to such isolation. No oppressed people that is crying and struggling for the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness can be a stranger to such a nation. America has a great gift which she holds in trust and which she must give to those who need it, or suffer the fate of the servant who buried his talent in the ground.

By the most bitter experience this world has had, America, together with the other free nations of the earth, is realizing that a world half slave and half free can no more enjoy permanent peace and security than a nation so divided can. The time has come for us to realize that our *active* sympathies must be allowed, nay, must be directed, to flow beyond our national borders and

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to reach to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Free men must shoulder the responsibilities and perform the duties of free men. Their task is not only to maintain their own freedom, but to free other men also. America's heroic breed must not be satisfied with the work of national development and the exploiting of a continent's material riches. The tasks of *human* development are nobler yet. America's business is not only to produce great merchants, engineers, and captains of industry; it is not only to perfect a system of vocational education through which to develop generations of efficient bread-winners and builders of a vast material civilization, but to be the champion of liberty not only in word, but in deed. Her business is to heal the broken-hearted

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and open the prisons to them that are bound.

Why should not America go into the Near East and do the work of a liberator and educator? Why not shoulder the civilized man's burden and seek to serve the cause of human freedom among peoples that are crying for help? Is it because of her policy of non-interference? But when we come to liberate an oppressed person, we do not interfere with his own affairs, but with the affairs of those who oppress him. By seeking to heal a sick person, we interfere with the disease and not with the patient. Such ministrations are not meddlings in any one's legitimate affairs, but services required of us by the God of justice and mercy. An oppressor, *as such*, has no rights which free men are obliged to

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respect. Wherever the work of liberation and enlightenment is needed, there is the place where free men, whether as soldiers or as teachers and missionaries, should be.

Can the land which has given the human race its greatest prophets and noblest scriptures, and which cradled Christianity, be to America a strange and alien land? Can the glory of Lebanon, the coasts of Sidon and Tyre, Galilee, Olivet, and Zion be called by America common and unclean? Is not the soul of a people which has made so rich contributions to the spiritual treasures of the world worthy to be redeemed and restored? Let America's generous soul answer! Syria, Christendom's Holy Land, martyred Armenia and Asia Minor, where the whole history of the "early

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Church" is buried under the iron heel of ruthless rulers, are moaning under centuries of oppression and crying for deliverance. Their redemption, besides being a divine act of mercy toward them and a rich blessing to their rescuers, would contribute materially toward the doing away with the causes of future wars.

As will be seen in the following chapters, the needs of the peoples in whose behalf I am speaking are peculiarly appealing. They differ materially from the needs of Belgium, and even from those of Russia and the Balkan States. Those peoples of the East need to be mothered by a nation which shall be free from self-interest in her dealing with them, and which shall lead them tenderly into that coveted state of "self-determination."



## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

What nation, let me ask, is so eminently qualified to perform such a noble duty and to render such disinterested service as America is? None in the whole world! Her fundamental democratic tendencies, her wealth and intelligence and power, her faith in the nobler possibilities of human nature, and, above all, her freedom from the lust for world-dominion, all render her most fitted for the great and glorious task, and make her the trusted friend of the weaker peoples of the earth.

So let America heed the call of those oppressed peoples as a voice from on high. Let her bind herself to the vow of a greater service to mankind than she has yet rendered, for the renewal of her own soul and the good of the world.

America, go east!

### CHAPTER III

#### THE EAST'S HUMAN ASSETS

**I**T is not necessary for me, in order to develop the subject of this volume, to enter into a general discussion of what is known as the "Turkish problem." This complex and significant problem has been dealt with by many writers, and a general consideration of it does not come within the scope of the present work. The Turk as a strange human type, as an incompetent and cruel ruler, and as a barren branch of the human race, so far as any constructive achievements are concerned, is well and hatefully known to the civilized peoples of the earth. And

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

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it is because of these demerits of its rulers that the so-called Turkish Empire has never attained real unity and strong and fruitful cohesion. It has never had a high and mastering ideal as a nation to bring its diversities of races and faiths into subjection to the common good.

When the "Revolution" of 1908 took place in Turkey, a gleam of hope flickered for a time in the land. The intelligent classes *loved* to hope that a better day was dawning upon a people that had suffered long and silently endured; that liberty and justice and enlightenment were on their way to revive and strengthen the soul of a people which had dwelt so long in the valley of the shadow of death. But that political enterprise proved a miserable failure. It

## THE EAST'S HUMAN ASSETS

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failed so, because it was not the revolution of a people, but of a few army officers. The majority of the army in European Turkey "joined the Revolution" and dethroned the bloodthirsty Abdu-el-Hamid; but in reality there was no government behind the army and no united people. Whatever the original intentions of those leaders of the Young Turks who inaugurated the "Revolution" may have been, the test of experience proved them to be no greater lovers of freedom and justice than the miscreants whom they had overthrown, nor half so able as those to direct the affairs of the Empire.

For our present purpose no more needs to be said about the Turkish "Revolution." The more distressingly interesting thing for us to consider is the fact that it

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

was not long after the Young Turks had come into power before it became very evident that their main purpose was to Turkify or, failing in that, to exterminate the non-Turkish elements in the Empire. When the Balkan war deprived the Turks of almost all their European possessions, the only "alien" provinces which remained under Turkish rule were Armenia, Syria, and Arabia. The unofficial protection which France and England had extended to those countries before the present war served to a considerable extent as a deterrent to the Turks. When the war came, the Turkish demons were unchained, and, supported by Germany, they proceeded to carry out their long-cherished designs against the helpless non-Turkish peoples under their sway. The unspeakable horrors of the

## THE EAST'S HUMAN ASSETS

vast tragedies of Armenia and Syria are current history.

Syria and Armenia are often spoken of by the majority of Americans as though those countries were one and the same. Their two names are supposed to be interchangeable terms. The facts in the case, however, completely contradict this opinion.

Syria and Armenia are two separate countries which differ from one another in every essential. They are, as the map will show, two distinct geographical entities, Armenia lying to the northeast of Syria, which occupies the region between Egypt and Arabia on the south, Asia Minor and Armenia on the north, the Arabian desert and the Euphrates on the east, and the Mediterranean on the west. The Armenians are Aryans

## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

by race, and, as such, they hold a closer kinship with the Americans than with the Syrians. They have an ancient native language of their own, which is one of the Indo-European family of languages. They have a national Church, the Armenian Church, whose origin goes back perhaps to the second century of our era. For many centuries before and after the Christian era the Armenians were ruled by kings of their own blood, a fact which has been to them, ever since they lost their independence, a mighty incentive to free themselves again from the yoke of alien rulers.

The Syrians, on the other hand, are Semites by race, with a liberal inclusion of alien peoples which the many conquests of that country by foreign powers left behind them. The present language

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of Syria is the Arabic, which is one of the Semitic family of languages, and is no more like the Armenian than it is like the English or the French language. While Syria is the mother of the Church universal, unlike Armenia it has never had a national Church. In it are represented all the ancient and several of the modern Christian sects. The Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite, Syriac, Jacobite, Coptic, Armenian, Nestorian, Latin, Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, and other churches are domiciled in that birthplace of the faith. As might be readily inferred, the Jewish faith is strongly represented in Syria, also the various Mohammedan sects, the Druses, and other less conspicuous non-Christian faiths. So far as numbers are concerned, Mohammedanism is the dominant faith



## AMERICA, SAVE THE NEAR EAST

in Syria, and has been, ever since the Mohammedan conquest of that country in the seventh century, the religion of the ruling class.

Notwithstanding the fact that the dominant blood in it is the Semitic, Syria has never developed a racial unity such as Armenia has. That is chiefly due perhaps to the fact that, by virtue of its geographical position, Syria has been from the most ancient times the main thoroughfare of conquerors, while Armenia has stood somewhat removed from that pathway of contending empires. Also the more constructive tendencies of the Aryan race, even in its less conspicuous branches, makes the Armenian a more efficient organizer than his more spiritual Syrian neighbor. So aside from the fact that an Oriental tone

## THE EAST'S HUMAN ASSETS

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of life and their fellowship of suffering under Turkish misrule bring the Syrians and Armenians together, in the greater essentials of their lives they are two different peoples.

Arabia, the third portion of Turkey which is inhabited by a non-Turkish people, and which recently threw off the Turkish yoke and proclaimed itself "the Arabian Kingdom" under King El-Husein, a lineal descendant of Mohammed, has a problem of its own, which is quite different from that of Syria and Armenia. The inhabitants of Arabia are of one blood, but their new national unity is not sufficiently free from internal dangers to be pronounced secure. Their kingdom is a theocracy whose component elements are in the main untutored tribes, whose allegiance to their

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chiefs is much stronger than to their king. The claims and counter claims to the throne of the legitimate descendants of the prophet will, it is feared, give no more peace and security to this kingdom than they did to other Moslem kingdoms throughout the centuries of Moham-medan history. My hope and prayer are that "the Arabian Kingdom" may live long in peace and prosperity, revive Arabian culture under even more auspicious conditions than it had in the past, and bring the Arabian peninsula into the communion of civilized lands. But I have great fears which threaten this hope. It is one thing for a people to proclaim their independence from foreign rule amidst the conflagration of a world war and quite another thing to maintain that independence and convert

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its ideals into national temperament. A theocracy is not likely to be hospitable to progress, and the theory that kings rule by "divine right" is not what the world of today is craving and fighting for.

Perhaps after this war is over Arabia will remain, like Egypt, under England's protecting wings. But thereby hang many problems, which I do not feel inclined, even if competent, to consider in the present work.

Of the provinces I have already mentioned, Syria seems to me to be the pivotal point. Up to the present the declarations of the United States and the Allies are that Asia Minor, being inhabited very largely by Turks, might remain under Turkish rule. Armenia is in a fair way of securing self-rule when

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peace comes, and will perhaps ally herself with Russia. Syria, which occupies the most significant position among those provinces of the Near East, remains, so far as its future government is concerned, without a definite prospect.

But before addressing myself more fully to the subject of government, I will give a brief survey of what I have termed "the human assets" of Syria and its neighboring provinces.

Intelligent Westerners find no valid reasons to class the Syrians and Armenians with the "backward peoples" simply because they are not rich, highly educated, and well organized politically. If what is meant by "backward peoples" are those human groups which are mentally incompetent to advance beyond a certain stage of social progress which

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civilized man has left far behind, then the peoples of my subject are emphatically not of those groups. So far as the native individual gifts are concerned, the Syrians and Armenians possess the proper credentials for admittance into the company of civilized thinkers anywhere in the world. It is true that the Orientals in general have not been very successful as nation-builders and their ethical standards have not been *uniformly* high; nevertheless their capacities for progress are as unlimited as those of their Western cousins.

In my judgment the failure of the Oriental to rival the better European type on the main lines of progress has not been due to intellectual inferiority nor to moral degeneration, but to a lack of genius for organization. The East-

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erner is a good thinker and no mean philosopher. He is certainly a poet and a spiritual genius, but, compared with the better European races, he is indifferent to system. His indifference to system, like a real dreamer, has been the chief cause of his failure as a nation-builder. He has not been able to see things in the large, and to subordinate partial interests and provincial allegiances to national interests and the common welfare of the whole people. As a result of this the political and social life of the Near East has for centuries been unstable and insecure, and this insecurity has rendered systematic progress, whether in education, ethics, or industry, impossible.

Yet satisfactory progress along these lines is not utterly beyond the Easterners. They are very teachable, and under

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proper guidance many of them have been found capable of appreciating and successfully dealing with the privileges and responsibilities of a highly organized social life. As immigrants in this country, the Syrians even of the "first generation" have given a very gratifying account of themselves. It is neither possible nor desirable to remove from an immigrant all his "foreign" characteristics in the course of a few years' residence in this country. To empty a foreigner of all his inherited tendencies and Old World habits is not, in my judgment, to "Americanize" him. The better method is so to guide him as to have him retain the nobler traits of his old simple and poetical life — traits which America needs — and to adopt in addition such American tendencies as are fit to be perma-



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nently incorporated into the national character.

Judged from this point of view, the Syrian in America will be found to be an asset and not a liability to the country. The criminal records of the country will show that on the whole he is a peaceful, law-abiding citizen, utterly free from the stain of the revolting crimes committed by some European immigrants or even native-born Americans. In educational circles his record is a source of pride to him and of deep gratification to his teachers. He makes a very creditable use of the ballot, he is an ardent lover of his adopted country, and, as the present military records show, a sacrificing patriot. While the majority of the Syrian immigrants of the first generation follow ordinary commercial pursuits, and lack in

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a measure the steadiness and endurance which characterize the hardier type of European and American industrial workers, yet the Syrian has entered successfully many of the professions — the ministry, law, medicine, dentistry, teaching in schools and colleges, engineering, and other professions — and proved his fitness as a skilled worker.

Even in his native land, under most adverse conditions, when he came in touch with European and American culture, the Syrian responded to its incentives most creditably. As a thinker he soon merited the respect and admiration of his Western teachers. His talents blossomed even in a land cursed by rulers who had no affinity whatever for culture. No national ideals were there to spur his genius to great achievements; no politi-

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cal offices to challenge him to employ his acquired knowledge in solving his country's problems and promoting the rule of law and justice; no industries to claim his services as a scientist, and no educational institutions, nor an enlightened public to receive him as teacher and author. Even under such rule, where every intelligent and progressive man was suspected of being a "revolutionist" and deprived of every means by which he might give expression to his opinions, and where every inventor was considered and dealt with as an evil genius and an enemy of the ruling power, the Syrian proved his large capacity as a thinker. The missionaries who came to him from France, England, and America as teachers soon found that, so far as his natural endowments were concerned, he was their equal.

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In his work entitled "The Nearer East" the noted English author, David G. Hogarth, M.A., has this to say of the Syrian: "There is no more enterprising, no keener intellect in the Nearer East, than the Syrian of the Fringe, capable of the highest Levantine civilization and triumphant competitor with the Greek in the latter's chosen field, the marts of Alexandria and all lower Egypt."<sup>1</sup>

Soon after Egypt had been brought under British sway, many of the aggressive Syrians found their way to that liberated country. In the peace, freedom, and security of the new rule those Syrians who were born, many of them, in those insignificant-looking, one-story, flat-roofed houses and brought up in the

<sup>1</sup> "The Nearer East," p. 194. D. Appleton and Company, 1902.

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simple fashion of "biblical times" soon distinguished themselves as thinkers and men of affairs, and won the admiration and loud praise of the English.

In his noted work, "Modern Egypt,"<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer, for many years head of the British forces in Egypt, says: "Whether from a moral, social, or intellectual point of view, the Syrian stands on a distinctively high level. . . . A high-class Syrian is an accomplished gentleman, whose manners and general behavior admit of his being treated on a footing of perfect social equality by high-class Europeans. His intellectual level is also unquestionably high." In the same book<sup>2</sup> this distinguished author adds: "I may say that those few Armenians with whom

<sup>1</sup> "Modern Egypt," Vol. II, p. 218. The Macmillan Company, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 220.

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I have been brought in contact appear to me to constitute, with the Syrians, the intellectual cream of the Near East."

From this brief survey of the human assets of the Near East it may be readily seen that its peoples can, under proper guidance, bring themselves to a high level of social and political progress, and become the companions, instead of remaining the wards, of the civilized people of the earth.

## CHAPTER IV

### “SPHERES OF INFLUENCE”

**I** HAVE already stated that the deliverance of the Near East from ages of misrule, by America, would contribute materially toward the removal of the causes of future wars. I have chosen Syria as the most strategical theatre of such action, because I believe the improvement of her lot would work most effectively for the betterment of the fortunes of the other Near Eastern countries, from Persia to the Mediterranean and from the Black Sea to Arabia.

Among those countries Syria is a pivotal point. Chiefly because of its

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geographical position as a passageway between the Empires of the Euphrates and the Empires of the Nile, and as a connecting link between Europe and the Far East, this country has been for ages the coveted prize of ambitious conquerors. Its control, if not absolute possession, has been the cause of many wars from the days of Sennacherib and Cyrus to the days of the present German Kaiser.

Syria's most holy city, Jerusalem, is unique among the cities of the whole earth. It is the Holy Place (Mackdis) of the three great Semitic religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism — and the only city in the world where every Christian sect has a shrine. As long as the Bible lives, Syria will remain the most enlightening commentary on the contents of that Holy Book.



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Notwithstanding its small size, its place on the map and its sentimental value to the three religions above mentioned give this little country a significance which cannot be rightly ascribed to any of its neighbors. In Syria are to be found also the majority of the great leaders of thought in the Arabian Mohammedan world, a splendid company of progressive thinkers who, up to the time when Turkey entered the war, not only stood opposed to Turkish tyranny in spite of their oneness of faith with the Turks and the fact that the Sultan sat in the seat of the prophet, but favored a perfect parliamentary system of government under which both Christians and Mohammedans should share equally the privileges and the responsibilities of public service. And it will be remembered

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that it was in Syria, in the midst of that distinguished company of Moslem leaders, in the city of Damascus, and to their great amazement, that the present German Kaiser made his pledge of "friendship" to the 200,000,000 (he said 300,000,000) Mohammedans at the tomb of the great Saladin. What a costly pledge of "friendship" that was! As a result of it the banners of the Kaiser and the Sultan were flown together in the war against democracy and the choicest of that group of Mohammedan progressive thinkers put to death as traitors! Syria is also the home of the Druses, a powerful religious sect not found anywhere else in the world.

Now this little country, this ancient mother of Judaism and Christianity, this great sufferer, which has been tossed

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from the hands of one tyrant to those of another for so many centuries, is crying for a strong and beneficent deliverer, for a real friend to guide her to enlightened self-government.

In my judgment America is the country which is best fitted for this humane task. I do not say that America is the best "colonizer," nor that Syria's real need is to be "colonized" by being tied to the chariot of a strong and *conquering* nation. The cry is rather for a big-hearted, disinterested helper, whose motives shall be above suspicion, and whose reward, the joy of helpfulness.

France and England have been in Syria through their educational, commercial, and political enterprises for many generations. They have rendered that country most valuable service. Their

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schools and colleges have exerted upon the minds of its youth the ennobling educational influences which their incompetent and cruel rulers have always denied them, and their fleets and armies warded off many calamities with which those rulers would have visited their helpless subjects. Whatever turn events may take in the future, the Syrians never can be too grateful to the French and the English for their efforts in behalf of that oppressed people.

Nevertheless, “European complications” have always served to qualify in the minds of the peoples of the Near East the intentions of all the European Powers in their dealings with those peoples. To my knowledge the Easterners never could have complete confidence that their own welfare ever was the sole incentive for

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those Powers' interferences in the affairs of the East. The European Powers never could trust one another in such matters, and most naturally the same suspicions infested the minds of the Eastern peoples. The traditions of their policies in the East all point to the fact that the European nations have always coveted "spheres of influence" in that part of the world, through which to checkmate one another's designs. To the natives the ultimate goal of European activities in the East seemed to be the extension and maintenance of European interests of one kind or another in that part of the world, and not the elevation and permanent liberation of the native races.

As is well known, these mutual suspicions among the European Powers in their Eastern policies contributed mate-

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rially toward the bringing on of this devastating war. The German scheme of the Constantinople-Bagdad Railway, which threatened England's position in Egypt, Persia, and India, the thought that the extension of England's power from Egypt to Syria and Mesopotamia threatened to make of the Mediterranean an "English lake," the suspicion that the increase of French influence in Syria to the extent to which it prevails in northern Africa, together with her alliance with England and Russia, would exclude Germany from Asia and deny her a "place in the sun," and other European complications led Germany to make her fatal move and plunged so many nations into war.

Now whatever may happen at the peace council at the end of the war, it

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cannot be reasonably expected that this conflict, simply because of its great extent, will do away with all past traditions, suspicions, and animosities and usher a new and purified humanity upon the stage of time. No doubt when the autocratic principle of government against which we are fighting is overthrown, and the *peoples* of Europe take the reins of government more effectively into their hands, international relations will be greatly improved. But it would be unwise for any one to expect, even after all this shall have taken place, that Old World policies will become absolutely humane and all the old systems will cease to be. "The old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit," is hard to kill, and the programme of human reform is a long one.

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In view of all this, America, by assuming the burden of reconstruction in the Near East, would render a signal service not only to those small countries, but to Europe, also, and to the cause of universal peace. She would go into that part of the world with clean hands and with perfect freedom from imperialistic designs. She would seek not a "sphere of influence," but a field for service to others, a moral obligation which her own genius places upon her. Her fundamental instincts are genuinely democratic. She is committed, not only by her Constitution, but by the living voice of her people, to the duty of maintaining for herself and of aiding anywhere in the world the principles of democratic freedom. America's declaration of war against Germany deserves a place



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in the New Testament. It is a noble spiritual revelation of a great nation's soul, the like of which never before cheered the hearts and revived the spirits of the oppressed nations. That a great peace-loving country should call to the colors twenty-three millions of her men to fight for "no territories and no indemnities for herself," but for the preservation of the principles of democracy for the world, is an act of beneficence unknown to this planet before. And it was a *people's* and not a *government's* act. When it became apparent that America could no longer keep out of the war without losing her own soul, the people's universal demand was that ours must be first and last an unselfish war. The American people stood willing to give their sons by the millions and their

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wealth by the thousand billions, *provided* that their country should keep herself in this war absolutely free from the desire, and should agree to no plan by other nations, to deprive any people of their lawful rights. This deliberate and voluntary sacrifice on America's part is sufficient in itself alone to win for her the confidence, if not the affection, of every small nation in the world and to merit the respect of even her enemies.

If America should go into the Near East in this spirit of unselfishness, the *peoples* of Europe would bid her God-speed. She would render Europe the most effective aid in the settlement of that knotty "Eastern Question" which has been the cause of many wars. No European nation could justly accuse America of imperialistic ambition, and

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the Eastern peoples would receive her as they would a true friend. It is difficult, if not impossible, for me to think that any European nation, whatever her intentions, could be so helpful to those peoples or so implicitly trusted by them and by the rest of Europe as America could. The past activities of European nations in the East, good as they have been in many ways, are not altogether in their favor. Their rivalries as colonizers and as seekers of "spheres of influence," "military bases," etc., and their ancient and deep-seated mutual prejudices make them strongly mistrustful of one another.

America stands before the world free from such complications. Her advent upon the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean would introduce a new and nobler

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order of things, and would place a check upon the sinister diplomacy of jealous rivals.

There are in the United States about two hundred and fifty thousand Syrians and more than that number of Armenians. These hundreds of thousands of Eastern immigrants, who represent all the various faiths and racial elements of their native countries, find America to be the freest, most enlightened, and most hospitable country in the world. Many of them have studied deeply and intelligently the spirit and methods of American institutions, with the greatest admiration. They speak of America as "the hope of the world." I am certain that the vast majority of them would be unqualifiedly in favor of having this country guide the small nations of the

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Near East to political self-determination. Their communications with their native lands have already leavened those countries with the American spirit and would be a potent forerunner for the actual endeavors of America in those lands. Furthermore, in these intelligent Americanized Easterners this country would have a very efficient force of already trained helpers which cannot be found in any European country. They have studied in American colleges, lived in American homes, participated in American politics; many of them married American women and are ardent admirers of American institutions. Many of them would follow the flag as America's great gift to the East, and serve as a practical and genuine assurance to their people that America's sole intention is

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to serve their higher interests and to bring them to their own.

Is not this mission of noble service to the East, to Europe, to America herself, and to the rest of the world worthy to be pursued by the United States? Could the participant nations justly object to such a course at the peace council? Let America address herself to this duty, to which God and humanity are calling her.

CHAPTER V  
THE PRIDE OF RACE

THE study of the problem of the Near East, like the study of the problems of civilization in general, calls for a consideration of the racial sense. The pride of race is a universal and, always, a *qualified* virtue. In one way or another every race has been led to believe itself to be the "chosen race" whose welfare is the special concern of the universe. Every race has had "divine evidence" of this and the "divine promise" of a superior destiny.

I have called this sense of racial superiority, or the pride of race, a virtue, because it has yielded good fruits in the

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long course of human progress. And I have called it a *qualified* virtue for the fact that in its various transformations it has been the cause of the saddest tragedies, from the time of Cain to the present. To the pride of race and the dream of racial destiny we owe the world's greatest literatures, both secular and religious. Religion, poetry, law, art, have been fashioned by the racial spirit. Every religious body, while claiming to possess a universal religion and including adherents from more than one race, has fashioned itself consciously and unconsciously after the ancient racial model. In *theory* its religion belonged to all mankind, in *practice* its religion was its own. All those who spoke not its shibboleths were considered aliens to the Kingdom of God. Thus, for an example,



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to the racial sense as manifested in Hebrew history we owe the sacred promise, "By thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," and the cruel command, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Amalek was an *alien* by race.

These instances have their counterparts in the life story of every race. From time immemorial the kinship of blood has been warring against the kinship of ideals, with great success. The idea of *human* brotherhood is a very recent growth. Compared with the hoary racial sense it is but an infant a few hours old. The past is all against it, yet we hope that the eternal future is on its side.

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The kinship of blood remains the social and political bond of the Near East. It is the centre of its clannish life and the limitation of its religious spirit. Clannish divisions persist and are vital even within the same religious fold, and the various sects are mutually opposed political parties. The long succession of tyrannical rulers in Eastern countries and the Oriental's indifference to organization have prevented the formation of a national ideal and the recognition by the various elements of the population of a common national interest, transcending all clannish and sectarian loyalties. Therefore the modifications which nationalism has worked in the racial sense in the great countries of the West have not yet come to soften the clannish and sectarian rigidities of the East.

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But even in Western countries ungenerous racial prejudices remain strong. I do not allude only to the Teuton's insane passion for a subject-world wherein the Teutonic "Kultur" might be inculcated as the noblest culture any race has known. The superior air of the Anglo-Saxon is too evident to be overlooked, even when he is fighting for the liberation of the world. This noble son of humanity, who has fought countless battles for liberty and law, and is the greatest nation-builder the world has known, remains to a great extent intoxicated by the idea of his own racial superiority. His tendencies to look down upon other races, especially the Asiatic, is still very strong. He looks down even upon those races for whose welfare he is willing to shed his blood. A great paradox, but not utterly strange.

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It is a striking evidence of the ancient struggle in the same race between the provincial man and the universal man.

But the Anglo-Saxon does not realize, perhaps, that those races, *even* the Asiatic, while recognizing his superior achievements in certain lines of progress, feel disposed also to look down upon him. At least they are not convinced that they deserve his scorn. What is there in the logic of things to prevent any race from raising itself in its own estimation to a high elevation and looking down on all other races? Nothing whatever. I knew a so-called physician in my boyhood days in Syria who was convinced in his own mind that he was the "superman." He had only contempt for all other men, which was but slightly modified by the friendships which he was

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forced to enjoy with his inferior contemporaries. His one prayer, which was well known in our town, was, "O Lord, take me away from this world, or take this world away from me!"

There was no logical process by which the "doctor" could be convinced that he was in error. At last the Lord granted his prayer by taking *him* away from this unworthy world.

The Oriental, also, feels that he is of superior quality, that he has a "right" to look down upon even the Anglo-Saxon. Why not? What difference can there be between the "right" which the Anglo-Saxon feels certain that he has to look down upon the Oriental, and that by which this man feels himself entitled to look down upon the Anglo-Saxon? Is not the whole thing a question of per-

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sonal opinion, since neither party accepts the other party's position? The Syrian knows that he has given Europe its religion, the crowning glory of all human possessions. He claims to be more spiritual and more hospitable than the Anglo-Saxon is; that his friendship is truer and of a deeper spiritual quality, his women more modest than Western women, and his social life in general less encumbered by the many cares for material things which weigh down the social life of the Occidental.

Unimportant whether all these claims are valid or not. They are made by the son of the East with the same self-assurance that he is right which characterizes the Anglo-Saxon claimant to racial superiority. Both are needy of the grace of God.

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Racial prejudice among civilized peoples is much like the appendix in the human body. It was a useful organ once, but now is a source of danger. In the remote past, when the clan and the tribe had only one ideal, and that was self-preservation; when clans and tribes and races had no common interests and no conception of human solidarity; when they lived in terror of one another and to the strong was the battle, then racial prejudice served, like fear, as a protective instinct. Then this racial feeling was deemed an unmistakable evidence of loyalty. And just as the sense of fear decreases in individuals and nations with the increase of mutual interests and mutual confidence, so does, or should, racial prejudice decrease with the advance of culture and a deeper apprecia-

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tion of character and the humanities. In civilized persons this racial trait is a mental appendix fraught with danger, and should be removed, regardless of the pain of the operation. Let Reason and Love be the surgeon, and give this useless remnant of barbarous times to the dogs. To despise a man, regardless of his character and spiritual possibilities, simply because of his race and, perhaps, his peculiar physiognomy, is a crime against one's self, the man one despises, and civilization. That Human Commonwealth for which right-minded men hope and pray can never be fully established until racial prejudices pass away. But the *pride* of race in a nobler sense does not need to be destroyed; it needs to be fulfilled. It may be lawfully experienced as the reward of *service* to



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humanity, and not as a feeling of superiority of blood and origin. A true civilization demands that the greatest shall be the servant of all. We never can serve other men's higher interests as we do our own until we are able to truly love them and treat them as our equals.

I have said that in so far as the Anglo-Saxon and the Easterner are afflicted with the sense of racial prejudice, they are both needy of the grace of God. But the Easterner in his present state is more needy of the grace of God and the help of man, because his racial prejudice, or pride in a lower sense, has split itself into so many eddies and become clan pride, church pride, and family pride, and prevented his greater progress. Such obstacles to progress the Anglo-Saxon has overcome in a great measure; con-

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sequently he enjoys a more tranquil life than the Oriental.

Victory over these petty divisions of race and clan is one of the pressing needs of the Near East. The nobler qualities of its sons as individuals are, because of these divisions, denied the proper conditions needed for their development and application to a larger community life.

So far the European nations which have associated with the peoples of the Near East have been either unable or unwilling to minimize, or destroy, those prejudices which have afflicted the Easterners for so many centuries. How could they, when they brought similar feelings with them? By their own mutual contentions and their seeking of "spheres of influence" by seductive appeals to the sects and clans of the East, the Europeans

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have served, at least indirectly, to confirm the Easterners in the errors of their ways.

Now America has a nobler appeal to make to the East. I do not say that racial prejudice has entirely disappeared from among the Americans. No. Unfortunately it still exists, but in a greatly modified form. The American Anglo-Saxon has not entirely outgrown this habit of his race but the New World has weakened it in him very materially. His own declaration that "all men are created equal" has served him as a new and quick conscience. He cannot ignore the dictates of this conscience without breaking the fundamental law and weakening the basic principle of his own social and political existence. He does sin against this Goddess of Democracy now

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and then, but always within the range of quick repentance.

Furthermore, America has been making the experiment of racial amalgamation on the vastest scale the world has yet known and with great success. Never since the world began did the children of so many races assemble under one flag to work out the problem of individual and national destiny as *free men* as are assembled in America today. The ancient Empires — Persia, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome — every one of them ruled many nations and races, but they *ruled* those peoples with a rod of iron, and did not educate them for citizenship and treat them as equals. So far in human history America is the noblest and most encouraging evidence of the hoped-for system of the “United

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States of the World." This country has proven to the world that the sons and daughters of many different races and the adherents of many different creeds, millions in number, could live together peaceably, as free citizens of one commonwealth, and have one supreme national ideal. Through this intermingling of races in a free country the various human elements are realizing more clearly every day that "of one blood God hath made all the races of men," and not of many "bloods." The children of each race are learning most profitably that the other races are not so bad as they have been thought to be. They are discovering that the "objectionable" traits of every race have been emphasized and fixed through ages of mutual antagonism and separation of the races, and that

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friendly intercourse and coöperation for progress will do away with all such traits. Intermarriage is producing new and comelier faces and forming new alliances; business partnerships are creating new and larger interests; public education, by welding the various mentalities together, is producing a more magnanimous type of mind; and the one atmosphere of social refinement is revealing noble and lovable moral and æsthetic qualities in the sons and daughters of those who have come from many lands. So in America even the Anglo-Saxon finds his own image and likeness in the children of "alien" races.

Above and beyond all that, because of this diversity in unity, American citizenship has a cosmopolitan outlook and a world-wide sympathy. According to an

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unwritten law the true American citizen is expected to be not only loyal to his own country, but a friend of mankind. He is expected always to see to it that his country, whether in peace or war, is the helper, and not the oppressor and spoiler of other nations.

Now could any other country undertake the reconstruction of the Near East with such traditions, hopes, and aspirations as characterize America's life? Could any other nation coming into the East inspire its peoples with the same confidence as that with which America could inspire them? We have no warrant for an affirmative answer.

This country could go into Syria as a friend and helper, not only as a Power that is free from the age-old European complications and without the craving

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for a "sphere of influence" for herself, but with the tangible fruits of a vast and successful experiment in peaceably welding many racial elements together and making of them one free and enlightened nation. She could say to the divided and oppressed people of that Eastern country: "I come to you, not with a mere theory, but with an accomplished fact. Blood and creed allegiances can, without being destroyed, be subordinated to a national ideal and fulfilled by being merged into the larger allegiance to a national flag. I have accomplished the task, and I come to teach you the secret of my success."

America would have a great cloud of witnesses to this claim, not only in those enlightened Syrian immigrants who would return with her to the country of their



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birth to share in its rebuilding, but in the thousands of other Syrians of all clans and creeds who have, after a sojourn of many years in this country, returned to the East, carrying with them true love for the Stars and Stripes.

Under American guidance the Syrians would have no fear for their religious creeds. In the first place, America has no national Church and no one faith that is upheld by national authority. The Mohammedan and the Druse, the Jew and the Christian of whatever sect, would have no occasion to fear that the faith of the "ruling Power" would be forced upon him or given the preference above other faiths. The religious impartiality of America is well known to the East, at least through the Eastern immigrants in this country. But an

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additional and significant evidence of this impartiality was given to the Mohammedans, which should be of deep interest to the American public.

Shortly after the American occupation of the Philippine Islands the United States Government sent an army officer of high rank to Constantinople to request the Sultan (then the ruthless Abdu-el-Hamid) to send a competent Mohammedan teacher to instruct the Philippine Mohammedans *in the faith of the Koran*. The Sultan was perfectly amazed, as were also the Mohammedan religious circles in the capital of Islam. They all marvelled at the unprecedented generosity of a Christian nation asking the head of the Mohammedan world to give fuller knowledge of their own faith to her Moslem subjects, instead of seeking herself to

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convert them to Christianity. This American attitude would exert a most beneficent influence upon the much divided religious bodies of the Near East.

In the second place, while America has no national Church, she is not indifferent to religion. She is not known to be an "infidel nation," as some European countries are. Notwithstanding her spiritual shortcomings, compared with other Western countries, America is a decidedly religious nation. Her regard for the Sabbath day and for the Bible is, I believe, highest among those nations, and her home life is more deeply religious than theirs.

This attitude, also, would not fail to appeal strongly to the deep religious instincts of the East and to revitalize in a practical way many of its static religions.

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Again, in these respects America has what the Near East sorely needs to heal the divisions of its life and to lead it to its rightful place among the civilized portions of the earth. The great Republic must not evade the glorious duty of redeeming a redeemable people, as no other nation can.

CHAPTER VI  
FOREIGN ALLEGIANCES

**W**HEN a people become conscious of the fact that they are being oppressed by their rulers, they will either rise in revolt, overthrow those rulers, and achieve independence, or invite outside interference in their national affairs in the hope of making their lot more tolerable. They will resolve to have either liberty or death, and to pay the high cost of freedom in blood and treasure and heroic deeds, or seek the protection of stronger Powers than the one which oppresses them.

For reasons mentioned in the preced-

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ing chapters, and other reasons, the non-Turkish subjects of the Sultan have never succeeded in forming a people's resolution to be free and backing it up by the sword. Indeed, so far as known they have never tried such a procedure. In the real sense of the word, Turkey has never had a people's uprising against her unspeakable rulers. Throughout its history the Turkish Government has been a form of military occupation of a conquered country with whose inhabitants the Turks have never been in sympathy. Those inhabitants have been allowed to live (but not always in peace) because they have always complied with their government's one cruel demand, which involved all other demands, namely, abject submission. And in order to make her diabolical position secure, Turkey

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has never ceased to foster and deepen animosities between the houses, clans, and sects of her subjects. She has always succeeded in preventing the possibility of any bonds being established between them. By her antagonistic attitude toward education and even modern industrial enterprises; by her highly favoring certain of the people's leaders and wantonly humiliating others, and by inciting the Mohammedans to massacre the Christians as a religious duty, and even arraying the Christian sects against each other, this evil Power has succeeded in ruling a divided and helpless population of many millions for several centuries.

Why so many millions of oppressed people have ever allowed themselves to be so fooled by the wily Turk for all

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these generations, is a question which it is not my present business to attempt to answer. All I wish to say is that such a situation is by no means singular in history. On the contrary, so far in the annals of government, tyranny has been the rule and freedom the exception.

Failing to unite and achieve their liberty, the non-Turkish inhabitants of Turkey, especially the Christians of Syria, accepted the alternative of seeking the "protection of the European Powers." A certain measure of protection was extended to them by those Powers, partly for humane and partly for political reasons, but that did not solve the main problem. The Turk remained the absolute ruler of his subjects, and the European Powers' vigilance as "protectors" could not be constant without being



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considered "flagrant interference in a sovereign Power's internal affairs." With the exception of the small province of Mount Lebanon, which, chiefly for geographical reasons, has escaped many of the Turkish cruelties which the other provinces suffered, oppression continued in the Empire, and the massacres were so timed as to render European interference with their success very ineffectual if not impossible.

Nevertheless, Europe was the only recourse for the oppressed Easterners, especially the Christians among them. But while those people were united in their appeal for help, they were divided in their choice of helpers. There was not a people's petition to some one Power to aid them in the execution of a unanimous revolutionary political design. The

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curse of division compassed this matter also. The choice of a protecting European Power was largely, if not wholly, controlled by sectarian considerations. The two great branches of the Christian Church in Syria, the Maronite and the Greek Orthodox, stood sharply divided on this issue. The Maronites, a powerful ancient Syrian communion, Roman by allegiance, had for their slogan, "France! and only France!" They based their loyalty to this Power not only on their kinship of faith and doctrine, but also on a supposed unity of purpose with her for the control of Syria, especially the Lebanon, ever since the days of the Crusaders. An intermixture of French blood is also claimed by certain aristocratic Maronite clans. These sentiments have been greatly reinforced in more

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recent times by the cultural influences of the French schools in Syria, which the Maronite youth attend almost exclusively.<sup>1</sup>

The Greek Orthodox, on the other hand, and up until the "collapse" of Russia, craved the protection, and even the actual rule, of that Power for Syria. The loyalty of the Greek Orthodox Christians of the Near East to the Eastern Roman Empire was in the course of time transferred to Russia as the "protector of the Faith." Russia's successful wars with Turkey, waged ostensibly "for the protection of the Christians of the East," always served to kindle the

<sup>1</sup> France's break with Rome a few years ago tended for the time being to weaken the Maronites' attachment to her. So long, however, as France remains Catholic in name, the Maronites' old love for her will endure.

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imagination of those Christians and keep their love for Russia fresh and strong.

The Mohammedans of Syria, who make up the majority of the population, are supposed to be one in their loyalty to the Sultan, who is not only the ruler of the Empire, but the Caliph of Islam or the lawful successor of the holy prophet. But it has been an open secret for years that the Mohammedans of the Near East, who have by no means been exempt from Turkish cruelty, are far from unanimous in their support of the Turk's claim to rule over them. A very strong element among them has for many years been as eager for "European intervention" as the Christians have been. This feeling has been immeasurably extended during the present war

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and in view of Arabia's secession from the Turkish Empire.

But those discontented Mohammedans are also divided as regards their appeal to Europe. Some want England, which rules seventy million of their coreligionists, while others prefer France, "the mother of civilization." At the same time the more conservative Mohammedans, who also would like to see Turkish rule abolished, long for an Arabian kingdom which shall revive for them the glories and the culture of the Omayyads and Abbassides.

The Druses are *openly* very ardent loyalists. They would be loyal to "our lord and ruler, his majesty the Sultan, even unto death," but *secretly* they find no valid reason for such loyalty. They lean toward England. The reason for

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this is, perhaps, because the French, in their brief occupation of Syria, in 1861, rather humiliated the Druses, and because, as mentioned above, the one Christian faction in Syria wants France, the other, Russia. Apparently the Druses prefer a Power not so strongly committed to the cause of either Christian body.

So far as numbers are concerned, the Syrian Protestants are a negligible quantity. Being in the large majority, the products of English and American missionary schools, they naturally prefer to have an English-speaking Protestant Power act as their country's deliverer. Realizing, also, that America is committed to a policy of non-interference in the affairs of other nations, they would have England as the hoped-for redeemer.

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Such must always be the state of a people that have not a flag of their own, nor a government whose foundation rests on the free consent of the governed. Their council and their allegiance must be divided, and they, for lack of an all-embracing national ideal, fall victims, not only to a tyrannical government, but to sectarian and clannish antagonisms.

Among the memories of my early years in Syria the heated, but intrinsically petty controversies on the subject of the comparative virtues of the European Powers stand out as very conspicuous. No time nor place was unfit for such encounters. At neighborhood gatherings on those long winter evenings, when neither books nor periodicals were there to beguile the hours more profitably, in the market-place, at wedding and funeral

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gatherings, at religious festivals, and at any place where the differing clans and sects came in contact with one another. One could hear at a considerable distance from the place of meeting the proclaiming of the virtues of a European Power, and the denial of the same, by the contending partisans, several shouting their opinions at the same time. "Russia is the giant Power in the world," says one. "Away with your Russia!" shouts another; "Long live France and her fiery soldiers! France is the mother of civilization!" "England is the most civilized nation," speaks a lover of the dignified Britons; "she is the Mistress of the Seas and the richest country in the world." Finally some wise man from the East, with more prudence than loyalty, reminds the heated appraisers



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of the merits and demerits of European systems that "we must thank God that we are all subjects of his holy majesty the Sultan, and we have no business with other dynasties," etc.

It may be readily seen from the foregoing that while the Syrians, like the majority of other Turkish subjects, have for many years longed for deliverance from Turkish rule and thought in their oppressed state that any change would be for the better, *as a people* they have been seriously divided in opinions as to what foreign Power should be invited to help them effect such a change. As has been already stated, the Easterners have never had valid reason to believe that any European Power intended to liberate them, but only to rule them as part of a conquered empire. They suspect all

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those Powers of imperialistic designs, and while they would submit, as has been their custom for centuries, to the Power that might take their country from the Turk, such change of masters, good as it would be in some ways, would leave the problem of the Near East unsolved. A mere change of masters will not lead the Eastern people to "self-determination." Furthermore, any one of those European Powers coming into Syria would be suspected by the other factions of favoritism toward the faction which has long contended for that Power.

The need is for a "dark horse," a nation whose intentions are above suspicion, and which has neither clique nor clan in the East to prejudice the other parties against her. America is that nation. Neither Maronites, Greek Or-

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thodox, Mohammedans, nor Druses could have reason to charge her with partisanship in her activities among them. She would come to them as a new Power seeking not her own, nor inclined to favor one party above another. She would be to them, not another master, but a friend, whose sole purpose in her "interference" with their affairs would be the promotion of their own good.

CHAPTER VII  
THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT

**T**HERE are few issues—aside from the main phases of the conflict itself—which the present war has created or made more prominent, that are more interesting to the world than the Zionist movement. Begun many years before, this movement has received an impetus during the war which has made interest in it, in both Jewry and Christendom, intense and very wide-spread. The proponents of Zionism among the Jews consider the vast and radical changes which the present conflict is effecting in the lives

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of the various nations as favorable to the consummation of Zionist hopes. The world is being refashioned. The majority of the great and enlightened nations claim to be fighting for the freedom of all peoples. Never before was the heart of the world so responsive to the cry of the oppressed as it is now. All signs, also, point to the permanent separation from Turkey of her Near Eastern provinces. Palestine has already fallen to the British. Zion has been delivered from Turkish bondage.

Is not the time, therefore, very opportune for the friends of Zionism to press its claims with greater vigor than ever before, and secure, if possible, the coveted land of Palestine as a free and permanent home for Jewish nationalism? So it must seem to the ardent supporters of

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this Jewish movement, and their hopes cannot be pronounced elusive.

Christendom, also, is deeply interested in the Zionists' expectations. This interest springs not necessarily from the Christians' love for the Jews, for hatred for the Jew has been one of Christendom's gravest offences against God and humanity. Christian interest in the Zionist movement comes chiefly from the fact that there are millions of Christians who believe that Christ's kingdom will not come upon the earth until the Jews have been "restored" to Palestine. To such the success of Zionism means the long-awaited regathering of the chosen people to their "promised land."

There are many others whose interest in this significant movement is purely romantic. The thought of a "restored

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Israel" to the land of its origin seems to reinvest for them the ages of Hebrew history with compelling charms. The picture of the sons of Abraham regathered as a people, free and strong, to "build the old wastes, and raise up the former desolations," and sing again the psalms of their faith and hope among the hills of Zion, is to the lovers of romance a most enchanting vision. This expectation for the advent of Christ's kingdom upon the final restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land and the legitimate romantic interest are shared also by many of that minority of Christians who are deeply interested in the improvement of the Jew's lot, and the restoration to him, as a man, of his lawful right of social and political equality with the other enlightened members of the human race.

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And it is not at all strange that the Christians in general, as well as many among the Jews themselves, should have only a superficial knowledge of the aims and purposes of Zionism. Zionism is not a general movement to "restore" the fourteen million Jews from all the regions of the earth to the Holy Land. Such an enterprise would involve, to say the least, a physical impossibility. Even if it had no other inhabitants, Palestine could not properly sustain one fourth of the Jews of the world, even if they could all be led, or driven, into it. Again, the Jews are very far from being all Zionists. Only a minority of them is deeply interested in this movement. Millions among them are perfectly indifferent to it, and many are decidedly opposed to it. But the leaders of Zionism are among the



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foremost men of this remarkable race, and their followers can by no means be called "only a few."

The purpose of the Zionist movement is to provide the Jews, who refuse to relinquish their claim to being a nation, a national centre and a "legally secured home" which they may call their own. I can do no better in presenting the purpose of Zionism than to quote the words of the honorary president of this movement in America, Justice Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court.

"Let us bear clearly in mind," says Justice Brandeis, "what Zionism is, or rather what it is not. It is not a movement to remove all the Jews of the world compulsorily to Palestine. In the first place there are 14,000,000 Jews, and Palestine would not accommodate more

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than one fifth of that number. In the second place, it is not a movement to compel any one to go to Palestine. It is essentially a movement to give to the Jew more, not less, freedom, — it aims to enable the Jews to exercise the same right now exercised by practically every other people in the world: To live at their option either in the land of their fathers or in some other country; a right which members of small nations as well as of large, — which Irish, Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, or Belgian, may now exercise as fully as Germans or English.

“Zionism seeks to establish in Palestine, for such Jews as choose to go and remain there, and for their descendants, a legally secured home, where they may live together and lead a Jewish life, where they may expect ultimately to con-

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stitute a majority of the population, and may look forward to what we should call home rule. The Zionists seek to establish this home in Palestine because they are convinced that the undying longing of Jews for Palestine is a fact of deepest significance; that it is a manifestation in the struggle for existence by an ancient people which had established its right to live—a people whose three thousand years of civilization has produced a faith, culture, and individuality which enable them to contribute largely in the future, as they had in the past, to the advance of civilization; and that it is not a right merely, but a duty of the Jewish nationality to survive and develop. They believe that there only can Jewish life be fully protected from the forces of disintegration; that there

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alone can the Jewish spirit reach its full and natural development; and that by securing for those Jews who wish to settle in Palestine the opportunity to do so, not only those Jews, but all other Jews will be benefited and that the long perplexing Jewish Problem will, at last, find solution.”<sup>1</sup>

Zionist writers dwell upon the fact that notwithstanding the improvement of his lot in many western European countries and in America, the Jew remains a “man without a country.” Many countries have admitted the Jews into full equality before the law with other citizens; nevertheless, the social mind of non-Jews in

<sup>1</sup> “The Jewish Problem. How to Solve It,” by Louis D. Brandeis; pamphlet published by the Federation of American Zionists, New York City, 1917.

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all lands instinctively ostracizes the Jew. The removal of his legal disabilities is doled out to him as a gift, and not granted as a right inherent in his status. Religious and political liberalism has greatly ameliorated his condition, but is dangerously threatening his racial and national existence. The direct and indirect aim of his toleration by the peoples among whom he dwells seems to be, not the sharing with the Jew of the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship *as a Jew*, but the hastening of his assimilation and obliteration. His racial distinction, his national individuality, his language, and even his faith are in grave danger of being done away with. In short, modern liberalism and toleration are threatening with extinction all the precious assets of Judaism and the gifts which have enabled the

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Jew to make so large and rich a contribution to the spiritual culture of the human race.

These very things the Jew must continue to hold most dear if his future is not to be the antithesis of his glorious past. And in order to do this, he must have a *Jewish* national centre, a land that he can call his own, where his language and his culture may be revitalized and enriched, and his racial type preserved. To Zionists, Palestine is that land.

In his book, entitled "Zionism," the noted Jewish scholar, Richard J. H. Gottheil, says:

"From whatever point of view we regard the situation, the unity of Israel must be restored. A complete reversion to unity of practice seems impossible,

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as modern conditions in the Diaspora will continue to increase unfavorably to the Jews. The Jewish hope must be constituted upon modern lines. Embodied in a physical centre, and that centre illumined by a rekindled light, it will serve as a point towards which the thoughts, aspirations, and longings of the Diaspora Jews will converge, and from which they will draw, each in his own measure, that sufficiency of moral and religious strength that will better enable them to resist the encroachments of their surroundings. The knowledge that in some one place, in some one country — and that country the most hallowed by its recollections — Jewish life is possible without the unnatural restrictions that naturally hem it in elsewhere, will act as a centripetal

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force, the very force that is needed to-day." <sup>1</sup>

This, very briefly stated, is the aim and purpose of the Zionist movement. Whether the Zionist hope is possible of full realization, whether, if realized, it would solve the "Jewish problem," are questions whose consideration falls outside the plan of this volume. What concerns us here is the bearing of Zionism upon the racial and governmental problems of Syria, and this I will proceed to consider.

The impetus which Zionism has received recently has greatly alarmed the Christians and Mohammedans of Pales-

<sup>1</sup> "Zionism," by Richard J. H. Gottheil, Professor of Semitic Languages in Columbia University, New York. Pp. 206-7. The Jewish Publishing Society, Philadelphia.



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tine. In the first place, the universal prejudice against the Jews is shared by those sects in the East. The Jews "crucified Christ" and "dealt treacherously with Mohammed." Until they abjure the sins of their fathers and are converted to the faith of their persecutors, the Jews will remain in disfavor.

But, in the second place, this inhuman attitude toward the Jew is not the sole reason which impels the Christians and Mohammedans of Palestine and Syria in general to resist Zionism. Its possible political consequences afford a more rational reason. The Syrians perceive that the goal of Zionism is the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine, or at least the establishment of an autonomous Jewish state under the protection of some foreign Power. Under

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the auspices of the Zionists, Palestine must either be detached from Syria and "given to the Jews," or become a "sphere of influence" of some Western Power. Either prospect is repugnant to the non-Jewish population of the "land of promise" and to intelligent Syrians in America.

The process of reasoning in the case is very simple. The Zionists' ultimate purpose is to establish a Jewish national centre for all the Jews of the dispersion. To this centre the Jews of the world are to look, not only for inspiration, but for redress in time of trouble. In Palestine the Hebrew language is to be revived and, in course of time, made the language of the land. In Palestine a vital Jewish atmosphere is to be created through the spread of Jewish culture, — an atmos-

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phere vital enough, if possible, to mould the character of international Jewry.

How, it is asked, can all this be accomplished without that "national Jewish centre" first becoming an *independent* Jewish country, sufficiently powerful to resist all modifying influences? The intelligent Syrians realize that independent nationalism is not what the Zionists insist upon *at present*, but they seem to be certain that nothing short of *that* would be able to make the Zionist programme a reality.

The claim that Palestine is the Jew's home land is not fully conceded by the non-Jews in that country, especially the Mohammedans. It *was* the Jew's home land, which he acquired by the sword from former owners. His successful conquest of the land gave him the right to

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possess it. But the Moslem is the *later* conqueror of Palestine. He also acquired it by the sword, and built in it homes and shrines. So if the successful conquest of a land carries with it the right of ownership, then it is the Mohammedan and not the Jew who has the prior claim to the ownership of Palestine. Again, the Jew's plea that the Holy Land should be given him on religious grounds is not absolutely valid. When he came into that country, he built his religious shrines on the foundations of the shrines of the "nations of the land" which he had destroyed. Palestine is the cradle of his religion, but it is also the cradle of the Christian religion, whose adherents are hundreds of millions. The Mohammedan, also, has his holy shrines in Palestine and in its Holy City. The

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**Dome of the Rock (the Mosque of Omar) is built on the very site of Solomon's Temple.**

**This being the case, would the European nations and America, to whom the Zionists are appealing to enable them to make Palestine a Jewish national centre and a "legally secured home" for the "chosen people," be justified in heeding such an appeal and furthering such a cause? Palestine is an integral part of Syria. It is dear to the devotees of three great faiths. The majority of its present inhabitants are non-Jews. Therefore, for any European Power, or Powers, to favor the Jews above the other elements of the population by paving the way for Jewish supremacy in Palestine and for its ultimate severance from Syria and its organization as a Jewish state, would be an act**

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of violent injustice to its non-Jewish inhabitants and an irremovable cause for future troubles. It would revive the feuds of biblical times between Jews and Gentiles, and thus emphasize religious and racial division in a country which sorely needs peace and unity.

These fears have already found articulate expression in Palestine since its occupation by the British. Representatives of the Christians and the Moham-medans have already held several joint meetings in Joppa and in Jerusalem, at which were considered ways and means by which to check the advance of Zionism. They have petitioned the British Government to protect the non-Jewish property owners, who feel compelled under the present stress to sell their properties to the moneyed Zionists at

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any price, by prohibiting such sales during the war. They have asked that government also to establish in Palestine agricultural banks in order to enable the land-owners to secure loans (which should be paid on the instalment plan) at a reasonable rate of interest. They have demanded also that the Arabic language be made by law the "official" national tongue of Syria. According to the reports which have been received, the British Government has agreed to these demands in principle, and is proceeding to give them legal form.

From the foregoing it may be easily seen that the unanimous resolution of the non-Jewish population of Palestine is that that country shall not become a Jewish state.

However, it should not be inferred

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from the foregoing objections to Zionism that the non-Jewish population of the Holy Land mean to exclude the Jews from it, or to deny them the rights which others may enjoy. On the contrary, the demand of that population is for equal rights for Jews and non-Jews. The Jew is free to return to the ancient home of his faith, to acquire property in the open market, to do business on the basis of fair competition, and to make Jerusalem the seat of his culture and a "breeding ground for Jewish leaders." But he must not ask for *special* privileges. He must be a coöperative Syrian citizen, and not the means of increasing the racial and religious contentions in the land.

So far as I have been able to learn, such are the views and sentiments of



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intelligent Syrians everywhere with regard to the Zionist movement. And although I suspect that this attitude is not entirely free from racial and religious prejudice, I consider its underlying principle to be sound. For the last two thousand years the Jew's lot has been hard. His "problem" is indeed a vexatious one and deserves the coöperative wisdom and sympathy of right-minded people the world over. But I fail utterly to see how the establishment of a Jewish national centre in Palestine would solve the problem of all the Jews of the dispersion. I fail to see how such a Jewish state, even if secured, could be powerful enough to compel fair treatment for the Jews in all parts of the world, or how to make every Jew look to such a state as his protector. Nor am I able to see

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how the Jews could live in peace and comfort in the "land of their fathers," if that country is detached arbitrarily from Syria and given to them. Such an act would plant the Jews in the midst of irreconcilable enemies, and thus increase rather than lessen their troubles.

I do not pretend in the least to offer a solution for the "Jewish problem." What I feel warranted in saying from my intimate knowledge of Syrian affairs is that it would be a great injustice to both the Jews and the Syrians in general should the Allies and America support the present Zionist plan, as they are petitioned to do by its advocates. In order that Syria may have permanent peace and a stable government, the Western Powers should simply maintain the "open door" policy in that country

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and insist on equal rights for all. The federal plan of government presented in the following chapter would, under American guidance, give the Jews of Palestine an ample measure of local self-government, and, at the same time, afford constitutional safeguards for the general interests of the country.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A FORM OF GOVERNMENT

**I**T is not conceivable that after this war the Allies would hand back Syria and Armenia to the Turk, nor abandon Arabia to his mercy. It is not possible to think of America consenting to such a course, any more than to think of her deliberately abandoning her moral sense. Those martyred countries have suffered enough from Turkish misrule to atone for all their sins and to array them in white robes of salvation. The day of the redemption of Syria and Armenia has come, and the Allies, especially America, should not by any manner of means allow themselves to thwart divine

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justice by again postponing that day of deliverance. One of the questions of this war should be considered definitely settled; namely, that Syria and Armenia shall never again be ruled by the Turks.

This hope has matured into a firm faith in the minds and hearts of intelligent Syrians the world over, and in that faith they are considering a form of new government best fitted for their country.

What shall this government be? Several forms have been suggested, both from within and from without the country immediately concerned. Some have suggested that Syria should be a colony of either France or England; others that it should be a monarchy as "the only form of government fit for such people"; others have asked for a republic or a federal union of states, something like

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the American Union; while others have urged that the few provinces of which Syria consists should be organized into sovereign states without being bound to a central federal government.

I propose to consider the possibilities of each of these forms in the hope of finding out which of them would really afford a permanent solution of the problem which confronts us.

Syria, as a British or French colony. I have the highest regard for England as a colonizer, and I should not object to a French colonization of Syria. Certainly such a plan would give that country a better government than it has had, at least for the last four hundred years. But what would be its permanent effect upon the natives, who are growing in intelligence, and upon international

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relations? It is one thing for a country like Great Britain, for example, to rule colonies inhabited by people of her own blood, like Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and quite another thing to rule alien peoples. This Power is known for her love of justice, law, and order, but when we contrast the conditions which prevail in those of her colonies which are English by race and those which are not, we find that, good as she means to be to all of them, the "alien" peoples under her are not so contented with her rule as those that are her kin. There is a vast difference between the state of things in Canada and the state of things in India and Egypt. The Hindoos and the Egyptians prefer England as a colonizer *to any other European Power*, but they are constantly and un-

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comfortably conscious of the fact that they are being *ruled by a foreign Power*. They are not perfectly reconciled to the thought of their being "colonized" forever, but long for self-government. Even the French Canadians do not feel so happily reconciled to British rule as do their English neighbors.

This is the serious defect of colonial government. The thought of the "colonizer" and the "colonized," the "foreign ruler" and the "native subjects," is not conducive to harmony and permanent satisfaction on either side. The colonists are forever the game of fortune — challenged by this Power and that Power to tie their wagon to *her* star.

Whenever the colonizing Power goes to war with another, the first thing the enemy Power does, if at all convenient,



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is to attack the innocent colonies and, in case of her being victorious, to demand their cession to her as "satisfaction." This forcible seizure of a country and the bartering of her fortunes in the market of foreign wars is not what intelligent men of the present day would sanction. Therefore, her being a colony of either Great Britain or France would not solve Syria's problem of government.

How would a monarchical system of government fit Syria? This method of government has been the method of the East for countless centuries and, at least so far as that part of the world is concerned, monarchism has very little, or nothing, to commend it. Yet the matter bears consideration. So let me say that I am certain that intelligent Syrians would not want some scion of a Euro-

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pean royal family to be transported into the East by the "agreement of Europe" and made a ruler over them. They have had enough of foreign kings. As to a native king, let me again say that, in view of the divisions which afflict that country and the numerous clans of "nobles" in it, the choice of such a king would be attended by interminable difficulties. The ancient traditions of the country would favor a Mohammedan Arabian king who would be compelled in course of time to make the law of the land the Koranic law and to rule by "divine right." Any other course in such a monarchy would be repugnant to the Moslems, who make up the majority of the population. A dynastic regime, besides its being antiquated anywhere in the world, would in the pomp-loving

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East be fraught with grave dangers. So while the world of today is crying for democratic institutions, no such system of government should be forced upon Syria. *Her* sons also are looking forward to democratic freedom.

The proposition that the few provinces of which Syria consists should be made sovereign states, without being bound to a central government, has been advanced as the best means to safeguard the various racial and religious interests of the country. The most ardent advocates of this scheme of government are to be found among the Maronites of the Lebanon, who form the majority of the population of that province. The Maronites claim that their bond of union is not only sectarian, but racial and national also. They maintain that they are an

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ancient race and nation that has never been fully subjugated by any of the conquerors of Syria. They are ready to prove that in their strongholds in northern Lebanon — a region which has seemed to all invaders to be most difficult of access — they have always maintained their freedom and have been subject to Turkey only in form, but never in fact. At the present time, when the future state of Syria is being considered, the Maronites assert that in demanding an independent and sovereign government for Mount Lebanon they are asking only for what history would grant them as their right. Asking only full recognition of their ancient freedom, which the successive rulers of Syria always hated to recognize and hoped to destroy, but could not, they do not wish to be com-

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pletely merged with the general Syrian population.

Another, and less personal, reason upon which our Maronite friends base their proposition is that, owing to the diversities of race and creed among them, the Syrians could not be really free if they were forced into an unnatural unity under one government. The interests of the Mohammedans, the Christians, the Jews, and the Druses are not identical, therefore could not be properly served, except through such plan of government as is here proposed. Let, therefore, the Jew rule in Palestine, the Christian in Mount Lebanon, and the Mohammedan in the other parts of Syria. I am not certain what sphere, according to this plan, is assigned to the Druses, who dwell largely in the Lebanon.

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It is no part of my present task to undertake to prove or disprove the validity of our Maronite friends' claim to the definite separateness of Mount Lebanon from Syria. My only word on this point is this: I was born and brought up in the province of Mount Lebanon. I am not aware that as Lebanonians we ever thought of ourselves as other than Syrians, or of our province as not being a part of modern Syria. Lebanon has always enjoyed certain privileges which the other parts of Syria have been denied, but that has never been thought sufficient to separate definitely that province from Syria, or to put it outside the Turkish dominions.

However, be that as it may, our present and more vital question is: Would such a plan of government serve the end

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aimed at and solve Syria's problem? Would it bring the various sects together as coöperative citizens, or divide Syria, as of old, into warring principalities? What a misfortune it would be for a country numbering less than three millions to be split into little "nations," each having its own army, border line, custom-houses, foreign relations, etc.! Again, the Maronites would make the Lebanon a free state "under French protection." The Jews would have Palestine for their state "under English protection." The Mohammedans would naturally seek some other nation's "protection" in order to keep the "balance of power" in the country. Again there would be produced in Syria the ancient petty kingdoms which in ancient times sought alliances with Egypt, Babylon,

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and other powerful dynasties. The hateful "spheres of influence" would be established by sheer force of circumstances and the various "sovereign states" of Syria swayed to and fro by the fortunes of the protecting Powers. Sectarian narrowness would grow ever more narrow; bigotry, more keen; and the danger of war between those states more threatening, as they grow in power and are urged by the ambition to enlarge their dominions.

This being, as it seems to me, the case, I believe that the most advantageous scheme of government for Syria, and safest for the world, would be a federal union of states, something like the American Union. I do not assert that this form of government, applied to that country, would be free from difficulties



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— it has not been so in America — but the *most advantageous*. It would give all necessary latitude to racial and religious interests, without disorganizing the country by emphasizing its divisions and by placing its fragments under the protection of half a dozen European Powers.

A federal union of states centred in a national government, with Damascus, perhaps, as capital, would give the various provinces the necessary freedom of local self-government and at the same time bind them all to one national ideal. The provinces, or states, of Palestine, Lebanon, Damascus, and Aleppo could then elect their own governors and legislatures, undisturbed by outside interferences, and at the same time remain united as members of a greater commonwealth than their own small principality.

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Under such a system of government those people who speak the same language and have the same general habits of life could establish a strong modern national university that should be free from all sectarian influences, where their sons and daughters might be educated, not as rulers and subjects, but as co-operative citizens. Sectarian interests could be served in other ways — as they are served in America — without interfering with national interests, and a new nation would arise in the Near East to greet the light of the new day.

With the sectarian and racial interests so guarded, through free action as regards local matters, the national government could then be organized on purely secular lines. Its officers would be chosen with reference to fitness, and not to creed and

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race. After the American plan the government would be one of law and not of men, and a civil service system would in course of time put an end to the special privileges of aristocrats. The people would learn to fight their internal battles with ballots and not with bullets, and the rule of reason would supplant the rule of passion.

But, it might be objected, Syria is not ready for such a system of government as this. It has large communities where ignorance is very dense, and its intense religious zeal would control the ballot and keep the reins of power in the hands of the largest sect. Yes, such dangers would arise. They are inherent in Eastern life. But has not the time come for Syria to have the opportunity of struggling with such difficulties and overcoming

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them? Is not she old enough to address herself to such tasks? The same objections were made in the case of Cuba. Yet that island never was so happy, so intelligent, and so sure of her future as she has been since her liberation. Now with all respect for the "Queen of the Antilles," I do not hesitate to say that the Syrians are *no less* capable than the Cubans of working out their salvation *under such magnanimous supervision as the United States exercises over Cuba*. Furthermore, has not America herself had to struggle most strenuously to make the theory of free government a reality in her life? Is not she struggling yet to "purify the ballot" from commercial greed, ignorance, and sectarian bigotry? "Heaven is not reached by a single bound" by any people. The cost of freedom is enor-

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mous, but freedom is worth all that it costs!

Here again we find that America, as no other nation, has what Syria most needs. The American system of government, which is the hope of the world, is the best fitted to bring that unhappy country to her own and to spread the democratic leaven throughout the East.

I am pleading for the American system of government for Syria, *together with* American protection. I can by no means bring myself to the position to plead for absolute independence for that country at present. With other lovers of Syria, I hope that absolute independence and complete sovereignty will in "the fullness of time" come to her, but that time is not here yet. Those who ask for such independence show by that that they

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neither know Syrian affairs fully, after so many centuries of Turkish misrule, nor what the responsibilities of complete political independence are. It would be cruel injustice to that country to abandon her at the close of this war to her own divided clans and sects and her uninstructed public mind, in the name of liberty. Syria is not ready for such a step. She will need protection from internal dangers, after her rescue from the Turks, as much as she will need freedom. But the protection she will need must not be of the kind which will save her from others only to make her the victim of her own protector. The protecting Power must not have ulterior motives and designs. She must not be so deeply involved in European intrigues as to make her connection with Syria a de-

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cided danger to the little country. Such a protector must be a free nation in every sense of the word, and must consider herself the disinterested friend and helper of the Eastern state.

America is already exercising such a function in Cuba, and I plead for the extension of the same beneficence to Syria. Geographical distance is no longer an important factor in international affairs. *Syria, also, is at America's door.*<sup>1</sup>

Given time enough and a suitable opportunity, Syria will some day enjoy absolute political independence. At present,

<sup>1</sup> The Syrian situation might demand a different treatment from that of the Cuban situation, like a longer occupation of the country by America, etc. My plea is for the principle of America's dealing with Cuba and not for her identical method of procedure.

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however, she needs American protection and guidance to keep her at peace internally and enable her gifted children to acquire an enlightened collective mind. Let America go into Syria with the "red school house" — it will be the "gray" school house in Syria, for it will be built either of stone or sun-dried brick, such as the Israelites made in Egypt. Let her introduce into Syria modern industrial enterprises, but not so much of them as America herself is burdened with. In short, let America carry to the Near East the *wholesome* enterprises of her more advanced civilization, with democratic freedom as the centre of their vitality, in order that the new interests might cause a more liberal and more beneficial regrouping of the Syrian population. When the intelligent classes



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among the various sects join hands — which I am certain they would under American auspices — in the promotion of the various political, civic, and industrial enterprises, then religious and racial prejudices will begin to soften, and a national feeling to bind together the hitherto scattered elements of the population will prevail.

How long such a protectorate should continue cannot be determined in advance. The length of time in such a case must be measured by the vastness of the enterprise. If the Syrian people were assured by *practical* evidence that America's purpose in coming to them was not to exploit their resources for her own benefit, nor to count their country among her "possessions," but to help their intelligent men and women to train

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their people for self-government, they would not restlessly watch for the time when such a valuable service should be discontinued. Their desire for the termination of such friendly relations would run no faster than the capacity of the people to rule themselves would allow. The entire East would feel the beneficent influences of such a policy, the entire colonial policy of Europe would be improved by it, and America herself would be benefited by the services she would render, and by her closer contact with the poetical and spiritual Eastern mind.

CHAPTER IX  
POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS

**T**HE novel aspect to the general American mind of the appeal of this book cannot fail to call forth many objections. Here America is urgently requested to depart definitely from her ancient policy of isolation from the rest of the world and invited to a task not wholly agreeable to the rank and file of her citizens. As I have already hinted (Chapter II), by way of interpretation of the American attitude, the evidence is by no means clear that, because America has temporarily departed from her old position through her par-

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ticipation in a European war, she intends that this departure should be permanent. It is not altogether unsafe to suppose that, notwithstanding the great enthusiasm for the war which at present sways this country, the deeper and more sober expectation of the people in general is that after victory is won and peace concluded, America should withdraw to within her own borders, assume her old wise attitude, and leave the Old World to its own devices.

The fact is, there are millions of Americans who still consider the present conflict a *European* war instead of a world-earthquake involving all the nations and tribes of the earth. There are millions who still think that America came into this war by a choice which she might have easily *refused* to make. And the

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more novel thing is that those millions are still deluded by the thought that previous to her entry into the present war, America *was really* detached from the Old World.

The real truth is, America never was, or could be, isolated from the rest of the world, excepting in theory. Her forced entry into the war proves conclusively that the "affairs of other nations" are not altogether alien to the great Republic of the West. The rush of millions of her sons to the colors proves that her people could not, even if they would, leave the Old World to drift for itself. Her larger vision of her destiny forced her to a task whose glory shall be forever a lamp to the feet and a light to the path of her children.

Is it, therefore, reasonable to think

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that at the conclusion of the present war America will be able to crawl back into her old shell and limit herself to her domestic duties? The trend of events and the mandates of history, which is being made before our eyes, with its years assuming the significance of centuries, all answer No!

Now, if America is to move toward the fulfilment of her greater destiny by casting her lot with the rest of the world and permeating it with the wholesome leaven of her spirit, what nobler duties could she possibly assume in addition to her home concerns than those which this book presents? Could she be more helpful to the downtrodden peoples of the world and more effective in helping to solve its grave problems than by planting herself, for as long a time as may be

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necessary, in the most pivotal spot on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, which has been to the nations of Europe a bone of contention for centuries?

But, it might be said, if we were to embark on such a policy, where should we stop? I will answer this question by asking: Why should we be so anxious to know where we should stop? Why should a nation like America, which has so much to give the world, be searching for a terminus for her beneficent activities? Americans never seem to be anxious to know where to stop with their commercial and financial enterprises. New markets for their sewing machines, automobiles, agricultural implements, oil, lumber, and many other commodities are constantly sought by them without the consciousness of geographical bounds

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and limits. Are these the things for which America lives and the *only* things she has to give the world? Shall she be ready and willing to give the world the things that perish and withhold from the world the things that remain?

No, a nation which has America's ideals, which has America's material and human assets, should never even dream of a stopping-place for her acts of helpfulness. Her philanthropic spirit should have the wideness of the sea, and her democratic ideals should be carried by her wherever oppression is found.

Again it might be said that America has enough problems of her own without seeking others thousands of miles away. Let her first solve her labor-and-capital problem, her race problem, her immigration problem, and other perplexi-



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ties which threaten her own life, then go out and shoulder other peoples' burdens. If America wishes to reform the world, let her reform herself first; let her begin at her own Jerusalem.

There is wisdom in this protest. It calls not only for diligence and unselfishness on America's part in her wrestling with her grave domestic problems, but for humility and contrition of heart. Far be it from me to ignore, or even belittle, America's social and political problems, or to call those who invite attention to them in this manner mad socialists and anarchists.

But, let me ask, What nation could be a helper of weaker and less fortunate nations than herself if she waited until she was perfect before lending them her counsel and strength? If the apostles

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of Christianity had waited until Syria had become a thoroughly Christlike nation before carrying their message of "glad tidings" to the outside world, it would certainly have gone ill with the world. They *began* their preaching at Jerusalem, but did not limit themselves to that city until all her problems had been solved.

The expectation is not that America should come into Syria as a New Jerusalem coming down from heaven, but as a nation that has her share of the problems which vex our humanity. Her warrant for extending a helping hand to a weaker people would be, not her perfection, but the fact that she is immeasurably more fortunate than those she seeks to serve. It would be a great encouragement to the people of the Near East

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— and not the contrary — to realize that even a nation so large, rich, and strong as America is has great problems to solve, and that her free soul and democratic education will in the end overcome those difficulties. America also, by endeavoring to bear other peoples' burdens, would find herself better fitted to bear her own burdens. She would acquire a broader spirit by acquiring a larger measure of human sympathy than she now possesses. *For the sake* of those peoples, she would sanctify herself. A fresh force and a deeper insight would be given her to apply to her own domestic problems, especially the race problem and the immigration problem. By leading the people of the Near East in the new paths of progress America would afford ample reason to an immense number of would-be

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immigrants to this country from that part of the world to remain in their native lands.

Time has come for the peoples of the earth to *pool* their problems and to wrestle with them not only individually, but with their collective wisdom and power. Free and large-hearted America should, therefore, lead in this coöperative enterprise by reaching out to liberate and strengthen the peoples of other lands, and not shut herself up within her own gates because she has problems of her own.

But would not such a step, if taken by this country, bring her into collision with the European nations? Would they consent to her taking such an active part in Old World affairs, while, according to the Monroe Doctrine, she has closed the

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doors of the New World against them for a hundred years?

I think it possible that the European Powers, even among our present Allies, might be at least startled at America's new attitude toward Old World affairs; they might even protest against it. It is very probable also that such a protest, if made, would be based on the principle of the Monroe Doctrine. But is there no difference between the European intentions against which the Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed and the motives which would be America's spring of action in the Near East? President Monroe's declaration was made against a suspected concert of European Powers against the growing liberties of the South American republics. Here is his historic utterance in behalf of those republics:

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“We could not view an interposition for oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. . . . The American continents should no longer be subjects for any new European colonial settlements.”

President Monroe’s warning, by which the United States has stood for all these years, was sounded against the intentions of those European nations who sought to *oppress* and to *possess* the South American nations, then beginning successfully to work out their salvation from Spanish oppression. Utterly unlike this would be America’s course in the Near East. She would seek *neither* to oppress nor to possess (not even as a “colonizer”) the

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Syrian people, but to serve and save them from a state of things from which Europe has thus far failed to redeem them. Therefore the principle of the Monroe Doctrine could not be fairly employed to exclude America from the Old World, since her course would be entirely different from that which the European Powers, referred to in Mr. Monroe's message, intended to take with regard to South America.

On what other grounds could the Allies object to America's intention to reconstruct Syria and serve the higher interests of the Near East in general? If the Allies' declaration that this war is being fought at such frightful cost for the purpose of "crushing militarism and *freeing the oppressed peoples of the world*" is as sincere as America's declaration to the

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same end is, why then should they object to America's plan to free and rehabilitate Syria? Do they have some ulterior design behind this noble declaration? I should very much hate to believe that they have.

I do not believe, I cannot believe that the intention of our Allies could be that those unfortunate provinces of the Near East should be kept as a reserve fund in the hands of the European Powers to be handed from one to the other of them in "settlement" of their disputes. Such a course would mean, so far as the East is concerned, the defeat of our purpose in the war.

Furthermore, I believe that after Germany has been restored to her sanity by the defeat of her war-mad masters, the pan-Germanists, the German people



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would have no real reason to resent America's interposition between them and their historic rivals in the Near East. On the contrary, Germany — *sane* Germany — would be relieved of those corroding suspicions which the extension in that part of the world of the influences of her European neighbors has always awakened in her.

America will not depart from her declaration for "no territories and no indemnities for herself" as her reward for entering the war, nor would she be departing from this noble policy if she should accept her share of the "white man's burden" by undertaking to liberate and build up a country whose sufferings have been many and unspeakable. Let this, therefore, be America's demand at the peace council.

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Finally, would the Syrian people themselves accept America's offer and consent to her plan for them? As I have already stated, the Syrians are seriously divided in their preferences as regards a protecting Power for them. America has not been considered by them to any appreciable extent, because she has had no dealing in Old World politics. Now in order to give an intelligent answer to the above question the realization of one important fact seems to me to be indispensable. That is, the Syrian people will have to accept whatever the peace council gives them. They are not an organized nation like Belgium, or Serbia, or Rumania. They lack every essential of national organization, because they have been for many centuries an inarticulate part of a loosely constructed empire.

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This, coupled with their divided opinion, will render their own demands at the close of the war very ineffective. My question, therefore, is — since that country *must* accept for the time being what the peace council will give her — why not give her such a plan of government and such a protector as would relieve her of all European contentions and work out her permanent salvation? In order that all this might be accomplished, the task should be assigned to America.







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